at the end of that reign and some of his children starved to death. Appointed in 759 to an official charge which irked him, he left it, thoroughly disillusioned. In the capacity of censor he ultimately fell into disgrace for dealing faithfully with Ming Huang's successor. In contrast with Li Po, he took great pains with his composition and his work lacks a certain daring and lyrical quality which are found in the other. The iron had entered deeply into his soul and he was a stark realist, portraying suffering in very moving fashion.

Later than Li Po and Tu Fu was Po ChiH (772-846). The son of a minor official, he himself early passed the state examinations and entered upon an official career. Most of his life was spent in public office in the capital and the provinces, sometimes in and sometimes out of imperial favor, and, accordingly, occasionally in virtual banishment to an obscure and distant local post. Trained in the Confucian classics, he valued content above form and sought to make his verses the medium for moral instruction. In this he was not always successful, for the poet in him often broke the bonds of his Confucianism. It was the romantic lines which he composed while in this mood that were the most popular. He could use either the classical or the newer poetic forms and was careful to make his work simple, testing it, so we hear, by its intelligibility to an old peasant woman. For years many of his poems were enormously popular and were on the lips of high and low.

Many another poet of the T'ang might be mentioned—the soldier Ch'en Tzu-ang, the military counsellor Sung Chih-wen, Wang Wei the painter, the Taoists Ch'ang Chien and T'ao Han, and Liu Tsung-yiian, the earnestly Buddhist friend of Han

Yii. One collection includes nearly fifty thousand poems of the period, and many are still read and admired.

FICTION

It must also be noted that there was prose fiction, written in the vernacular and made up mostly of short stories and rudimentary novels. It arose from the story tellers who narrated their tales, sometimes in verse, sometimes in a mixture of verse and prose, and sometimes in prose. Beginning with about the eighth century, they began to put their tales into writing, much as they